

CORRESPONDENCE.

796 LAFAYETTE AVE.,
BROOKLYN, N. Y., APRIL 16, 1889.

I am constantly in receipt of letters from young women desiring information on the kind of books which would be best for them to read. I do not like to generalize on this subject, and as I am rarely informed of the ages, tastes or talents of my correspondents, or told what they have read, the obstacles in the way of intelligent answers can be readily comprehended. A prominent member of Sorosis, and a very helpful woman, once said she was willing to do anything for any girl that didn't chew gum. I am willing to do all I can for any girl who knows enough to state what she wants in an intelligent manner, though I cannot fellowship with girls who chew gum, or the girls who wear shoes too small for them, or the girls who compress a twenty five inch waist into an eighteen inch corset.

Agents of all the European steamship lines report unprecedented travel for the coming summer. Several lines anticipate the necessity of putting on extra steamers. Berths have been engaged several weeks ago on the splendid steamship *Voordland* of the Red Star Line, sailing July 3d, direct for Antwerp, for a small and select party of ladies who will make the tour described briefly by me in one of my letters. The party is not yet complete, but prompt action will be necessary to insure a place in what promises to be a most agreeable party, chaperoned and conducted by a lady who recently returned from a residence of two years and a half abroad, and who is perfectly familiar with the methods of European travel and sightseeing, and with the French language, a knowledge of which is so necessary on the continent. I will mail a programme of this tour to any one wishing it.

"Are gingham dresses to be worn on the street in warm weather?" a lady from Wichita, Kansas, inquires. Yes; they are being made up now in every imaginable design. The material is lovely and exceedingly inexpensive. I inspected some gingham dresses a few days ago which had been bought and made by measure for some ultra fashionable in the South, which cost \$25 each. The goods and the gingham cost \$5.00, and the rest of the amount was claimed by the dressmaker. This seemed to be a foolish waste of money, but Miss Anderson, who was exhibiting these consignments with considerable pride, smilingly answered that when women selected their dressmakers they did not feel herself in the least constrained. "But, look at this," she continued, shaking out, as she spoke, another gingham dress of a pink plaid pattern, most beautifully designed. "The materials of this dress cost \$1.50 and the dressmaker's bill was \$7.00. The peculiarity of this costume is that it was ordered by a very wealthy lady for her daughter. I was told to employ a dressmaker of good taste but I was not to pay fancy prices. 'Don't let anybody down,' said she, 'but get an honest figure.' Now, this dress, the shopper went on, "is just as well made, and precisely as stylish as the others I have shown you, and the saving is exactly \$13.50."

I am glad to see that many young ladies are designing and making their own summer dresses. The prettiest costume I have seen this spring was made by a friend of mine who had never before attempted any such work. The father of this young woman told her she could go to Colorado for a two months' excursion if her bills for dry goods did not exceed one hundred dollars. To accomplish this she must save on dressmakers' bills. Like many another she found the work pleasant as well as profitable.

The shades in green in Paris millinery are more wonderful than pleasing, and when combined with blue, venetian red, and crown, are simply hideous. Some of these bonnets onto the rainbow in brilliancy, but not yet has the face been found that this *pot pourri* of color becomes.

The new Vienna belts are exquisite. Some are of bronze velvet, some of leather, others of seal skin with gold patterns. They all have chain attachments. On some of these the attachments are so numerous as to be quite puzzling and inconvenient. One very expensive belt had silver chains from which hung a cut-glass vinaigrette, a glove buttoner, a card case, a metal pencil, a small mirror, a tablet and purse, and a few other things. This is called "The Razzle Dazzle," and seems to me well named.

Reading has lost none of its charm, and is just as stylish as ever. Those who have dresses trimmed in this fashion need only to shorten the skirt, and rearrange the back drapery that formerly did duty over a bustle, and the recs that were still more deforming.

Dress collars are not nearly so high as they have been. The tendency now will probably be for women who have not pretty throats to show too much of them. This should be avoided. There are so many ways of arranging the neck now that it is easy to conceal blemishes of this kind. Falls of soft lace tend to hide defects. White linen collars are sure to heighten them.

As a rule, magazine poetry is not especially liked. Even by good critics outside of magazine offices—most of the matter published as poetry is considered stuff. It is pure intellectual abstraction, agreeable enough to the student who likes to analyze and scan and measure, but to the true lover of poetry who wants to be touched, comforted and inspired, it is a

dismal failure. That magazine editors select these poems with a view to edifying the admirers of architectural verse seems to be a foregone conclusion. Once in a while though, there is an exception to this rule, and Thomas Wentworth Higginson's poem "Sixty-six," in the April Century, comes like an inspiration from heaven to the weary writer for something true and musical and helpful and reviving. It is spontaneous and hearty and poetic enough to make up for all the dismal metrical platitudes that we have ever been treated to. The criticized editors could with truth reply that such poems are extremely rare, and that if they waited for this inspirational verse they would generally go to press without any. But architectural poetry is poor stuff, and most of us would rather have none. A letter just received from a Southern lady criticizes my remarks on "painted women." She writes: "When you say that it is the duty of every woman to look as pretty as she can, what do you mean? Some women are very much improved by a bit of rouge, or an artistic dab of black under the eyes; I am, and my toilet table contains all these beautifying articles. Of course these things must be discreetly used. Tony mind, there is no more harm in dressing up one's complexion than in tastefully robbing one's body. Now, please tell me if there is not more logic in my view of the case than in yours?"

This is a very frank document, and a certain appearance of logic is not wanting. But a painted face, to my way of thinking, is a confession of weakness, proof of the absence of brains and the presence of an unimpaired vanity. The women of my acquaintance who have rouged their cheeks and blackened their eyes have been pinched with but one desire in their poor weak heads, and that to please the men. Women should look pretty, but there is no beauty in artificiality.

ELEANOR KIRK.

The End Of The Morris Canal.
This is the last season of the Morris canal, once almost the greatest waterway in the country and one of the most interesting engineering feats of the world. The Lehigh Valley Railroad Company that has for many years been the owner of the canal is about to abandon it because it can no longer be worked at a profit in competition with the several railroads that now parallel its course from the coal regions to the seaboard.

The construction of the canal was authorized by the New Jersey Legislature in 1824, and the Morris Canal and Banking Company was organized to build it. The capital was fixed at \$1,000,000, with the power to increase it to \$1,500,000. The canal was designed to run only from the Delaware to the Passaic River, but in 1828 it was decided to extend it to the Hudson. The first practical step was the securing of a loan of \$500,000 from Holland capitalists. In the latter part of 1830 the first trial of the canal was made by five boats loaded with ore from Dover. The country through which the canal passed was so mountainous that the ordinary locking system of getting the boats from one level to another was impracticable, and George P. McCullough of Morristown had invented a system of railways run by water power, with cables that were to raise and lower the boats over long planes from one level to the next. These were an experiment in canal engineering, and disaster was predicted when the first trial of them was about to be made. Large crowds gathered at the planes when the five boats came along, to see them smashed. They went over all right, however, and the success of the canal was assured. It was rapidly completed, and was built in those days of cheap and honest work for only \$2,500,000. It could not be built now for four times as much, not counting stealings.

The canal runs from Phillipsburg to Jersey City and there are 23 planes and 25 ordinary locks on the route. The longest plane is the one at Newark, 1,040 feet long and 70 feet high. The planes at Bonton and Drakesville are ten feet higher, but not so long. Besides the planes there was in building the canal a great deal of brilliant engineering in crossing the streams and valleys on the route. Instead of being dug, a large part of the canal had to be built up. The greatest piece of engineering on the whole route is the great stone aqueduct across the Passaic River at Little Falls. This has for a long time appeared to be a perilous condition, and efforts to relieve it have been made by removing the coping stones of the walls and other unnecessary weight from the upper part. Its giving away would turn the water from seventeen miles of the canal into the little stream beneath and cause a disastrous flood.

Actual navigation on the canal, which began in the spring of 1832, has never since been interrupted except by winter, and the amount of traffic has been stupendous. The first boat through was the *Walk on the Water*, consigned to Stephen & Condit, a Newark firm, and from the very start there were fifteen or twenty boats a day arriving at the eastern terminus. Coal, wood, and the produce of the country along the route was the chief freight. There was also considerable passenger traffic, especially between Newark and Paterson, and people willingly paid fifty cents fare for this short trip. The affairs of the company went well until some stock manipulation got it into trouble

in 1844, and the whole property had to be sold to satisfy the claim of the Holland creditors. The company was reorganized and the canal run at a profit for many years. It was still profitable when the Lehigh Valley Railroad Company obtained control of it by guaranteeing heavy dividends on the stock, but the company took it not for the profits it paid, but to get rid of its rival in the coal carrying business, which was a serious damage to the railroad. Naturally the coal traffic was diverted as much as possible from the canal, and the progress of modern improvements in the methods of handling coal at the seaboard has made it now impossible to ship profitably by the canal. Just the digging of the coal out of the boats is said to cost as much as the whole freight over the railroads. The cost of maintenance of the canal is very heavy on account of the great amount of masonry and other built up work that must be watched carefully and constantly repaired. The planes are also expensive things to run and to keep in repair. Besides coal the canal has for a quarter of a century carried little but ore, wood, and ice with some gunpowder, and this from points right on its banks. The expense of maintaining the canal has kept rates so high that there was no possibility of competing with the railroads for ordinary freight traffic.

The abandonment of the canal will throw hundreds of men out of employment, and will make useless the peculiar boats, made in two pieces and hinged in the centre so as to pass over the planes without breaking their backs. These are awkward to manage even on the canal, and cannot stand rough water at all. They will be good for nothing but firewood after the canal is abandoned. A part of the canal will probably be used to carry water pipes for a new supply for Jersey City and Newark, for the furnishing of which a company organized under the protection of the Lehigh Valley Railroad is already building. The rest of the canal will probably be abandoned outright, and partially, at least, filled up. If the ditch is kept open the company will have to maintain the bridges over it, and that would cost more than the narrow strip of land is ever likely to be worth.

A Frequent Occurrence.
"The next time I give a woman my seat in a car she will have to be old or lame or have a baby or a bundle in her arms, or look ill, or be in a worse condition than ordinary," said a well known politician. "I had a choice seat in a Brooklyn elevated car a few nights ago. A lag crowd got in at one of the stations, and I reluctantly surrendered my seat to a healthy looking woman. I was dead tired, and I hung on to a strap face as the car started. The man who occupied a seat next to the woman who had been offered by my courtesy vacated his place. Before I could wink, this woman, for whose sake I had stood up in a jerky car for a mile, pulled her valise open, and who was evidently her son, into the vacant seat. This same thing has happened many times, but it will never happen again to me."—New York Sun.

Two Bonneted Dwarfs.
Sussex county, Del., is peopled in the possession of the Misses Martin, two remarkable little dwarfs, who were born and reared in that county. The oldest, Miss Lizzie, lacks three inches of being three feet tall, has a head in proportion to the rest of her body; is very intelligent, conversing fluently with all with whom she comes in contact, despite the fact that she weighed but forty-five pounds and must stand on a chair in order to put her head on a level with the shoulder of an ordinary person. But stand on a chair or anything else she cannot, neither can she sit for any length of time. She is provided with those very necessary adjuncts to standing—limes. A sort of cartilage answers in place of the bones, enabling the little nutes to move hands or feet with perfect ease. Both the dwarfs are quite nimble, doing all sorts of needlework, such as embroidery, etc., although the fingers may be bent in any direction desired without the least sensation of pain, being almost as pliable as so many little ropes. —J. W. Wright in St. Louis Republic.

The First Tax of Nature.
"I have a new story, told by the late Col. G. G. Lake, which has never been in print," said the visitor, "and he has failed to get the table in a room when the editor opened a drawer and drew from thence a large saw handled pistol carrying a ball that would weigh with point to the point. 'Do you want it pointed?' he asked sternly, 'or do you want to go to jail?' The visitor turned pale. 'I thought you might like to print it,' he said feebly. 'Shake!' said the editor, joyously, as he replaced the artillery. 'Write it out and take it to the printer; we'll be very glad to print it. Got any more?' —Los Angeles.

A Man of Much Importance.
Nathaniel Parker, of East Burke, Vt., runs the mail from Keeneville to East Burke, runs the river, runs the hotel, runs the Good Templar lodge, runs the Sunday school, is a singing student, and holds himself in readiness to run any other department of village industry which is not running itself already. —Boston Herald.

Cathedral of St. Pierre.
The venerable cathedral of St. Pierre, in Geneva, in which Calvin preached in his day, is to be restored. It is intended to remove the main facade and to finish the tower on the north side, besides altering and embellishing the interior at an expense estimated at 500,000 francs. A company has been formed for the purpose, after the pattern of the one which restored the Minster of Ratis. —New York Home Journal.

It is a mistake to paint tin so glaring and attractive. It makes young people want more. As a matter of fact, tin is ugly and full of impurities and pain, no matter how it may be colored or sugar coated.

Testimony in a recent suit brought by Harris, of Philadelphia, to obtain wages due him, revealed the fact that he had been employed to make trousers for 90 cents a dozen, or 75 cents a pair.

THE NIGHTINGALE'S SONG.

BY MARGUERITE TANNER.

The nightingale sang a beautiful song.
The other birds listened in awe;
They listened not a note although it was long.
For they ne'er heard such music before.
Clearly and sweetly it rose to the sky,
Born by the night air so calm;
And as 'twas so lovely they thought they would try
That beautiful evening psalm.
Now it arose full, rich and free,
Then suddenly faded away;
A glorious note was sung from the tree,
As evening was closing the day.
Far into the night you could hear the clear notes
When the fair crescent moon shone so bright;
And upward and onward to heaven it floats,
Till the dawn of the morning's fight.

—New York Sun and Star.

How Chamberlain Won His Wife.

A story is now going the rounds about Mr. Joseph Chamberlain's recent wooing and marriage that may interest American readers. By a romantic coincidence Mr. Chamberlain's son, Austin, played an important part in his father's marriage to Miss Echobott. The young man had met the lady at Washington the year before Mr. Chamberlain went there to negotiate the fisheries treaty. On his return he gave such glowing accounts of Miss Echobott that his father determined to meet the secretary's family and took an introduction from his son for this purpose. The sequel is known. The spell of fascination was cast over the father, as it had been over the son, and the older gentleman, perhaps in experience bolder in matters of the heart, wooed and won the lady, who is younger than any of his children, for his bride. —St. Louis Star Sayings.

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